



## Congratulations on your baby and your decision to breastfeed!

My name is Angelica Mendaros and I am a Certified Lactation Counselor (CLC). I would like to explain who I am and my role in the community. After completing a comprehensive course in breastfeeding management training and passing a national final examination, I am qualified to help with commonly encountered situations, including assessing latch, suggesting corrective interventions, counseling mothers, understanding and applying knowledge of milk production in special circumstances. I can counsel and educate mothers regarding breastfeeding and can develop a care plan specific to mom and baby. If a mom is experiencing a complex challenge, I will then refer the pair to the appropriate specialist.

I follow the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommendations which states:

*"Breastfeeding is a natural and beneficial source of nutrition and provides the healthiest start for an infant. In addition to the nutritional benefits, breastfeeding promotes a unique and emotional connection between mother and baby. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) reaffirms its recommendation of exclusive breastfeeding for about the first six months of a baby's life, followed by breastfeeding in combination with the introduction of complementary foods until at least 12 months of age, and continuation of breastfeeding for as long as mutually desired by mother and baby."*

Breast milk is the best food for your baby. Having a fed, healthy baby is above all. It is important to recognize the signs of why breastfeeding may not be working for you and your family. Concerns of baby not gaining enough weight, a poor latch or baby not wanting to wake up for feedings are common. Knowing when to ask for help is crucial when it comes mental health and meeting your goals. I am here for you and your baby equally.

When it comes to parenting, take all the help you can get! Apart from being a CLC, I am employed part time by the Monroe County WIC Program as a Breastfeeding Peer Counselor, where I assist breastfeeding moms one on one and teach breastfeeding classes, as well as lead support groups. I am also a breastfeeding advocate and enjoy providing breastfeeding knowledge to moms, dads, grandparents and anyone who is willing to listen. Here is how I can help you and your family.

### If you are currently expecting:

I encourage all expecting moms to take my free breastfeeding class, which is sponsored by Florida Department of Health-Monroe's Woman, Infant and Children (WIC) Program. In this class, we will go over the benefits of breastfeeding, the differences in breasts, different nursing positions, how to latch your baby, how to prevent common breastfeeding problems and much more. Bringing your support system is highly encouraged. Please call me to schedule for a class as space may be limited. I also encourage any of you to apply to participate in the WIC program as participants get free assistance from both me and the WIC International Board Certified Lactation Consultant, Mirine Dye.

### If you are breastfeeding successfully:

Many women successfully breastfeed without complications. These women find that being promoted, protected and supported is essential during their breastfeeding journey. As with many things in parenting, it takes a village. Please join your local Facebook tribe and give other moms the encouragement and support they need.

### If you are having breastfeeding troubles:

While breastfeeding is natural it is not always instinctive. Most moms fear that their babies are not getting enough, yet most babies are getting plenty! If you have felt the need to supplement and your goal is to exclusively breastfeed please contact me as I can help you meet your goals. It is said that breastfeeding hurts, however breastfeeding should never hurt. Correcting a shallow latch may make a difference in achieving your breastfeeding goals.

I too have a little one, and I know how hard it can be. I had a rough start with breastfeeding and experienced many challenges because I was not well informed. I know what it feels like to look at your bundle of joy and not know what to do. I've been there, and now I am here for you. I look forward to meeting you and your family.

Your breast friend,

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